



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TEXARKANA MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO BANK ROBBERY

(Texarkana, TX) United States Attorney Matthew D. Orwig announced today that a 40-year-old Texarkana man has pleaded guilty to robbing a bank in the Eastern District of Texas. **JEFFERY TOD MERCHANT** admitted to the charges before United States Magistrate Judge Caroline Craven.

According to information presented in court, on May 8, 2006, Merchant robbed the Red River Federal Credit Union in Texarkana, Texas. On that afternoon Merchant entered the credit union, approached a teller and handed her a note reading "I have a gun, give me all of your money." The teller gave Merchant \$3,602 in U.S. currency. Merchant fled the scene, evading law enforcement officials, hiding for several hours in a wooded area behind the credit union. That evening, several citizens recognized Merchant from photos released to the media and alerted law enforcement officials. Following a tip from a private citizen, Merchant was apprehended the following morning. He was in possession of \$3,385 of the stolen currency from the credit union, including several \$20 bills the credit union marked prior to the robbery.

Merchant faces a sentence of 20 years imprisonment and a fine up to \$250,000. A sentencing date has not been set.

This case is being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation

and the Texarkana Police Department. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Barry Bryant.

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